

Media Update

26 July 2016

United Nations

Secretary-General Message

CALLING FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF THE OLYMPIC TRUCE FOR THE 2016 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES IN RIO DE JANEIRO

29 July 2016

I call for a worldwide cessation of hostilities in observance of the Olympic Truce during the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

While such an ambitious vision may seem impossible to realize, the Olympic spirit calls on us to rise to the challenge.

The Games are all about shattering records of human ability. They motivate individuals and countries around the world to reach beyond the limits of what was previously thought possible.

With that same resolve, I call for a push to match efforts to win medals on the playing fields with work to silence guns on the battlefields.

A respite in fighting would manifest the values that the Games seek to promote: respect, friendship, solidarity and equality.

This year's Games are already making history as the first to be held in South America. And the International Olympic Committee has taken the unprecedented step of including a refugee team, giving talented athletes who have been forced to flee their homes the chance to chase gold.

This initiative will showcase the strengths of refugees while reminding the world that we must do more to tackle the root causes of their plight. There



is no greater source of exodus than conflict, and there could be no better demonstration of solidarity than to observe the Olympic Truce.

The late Olympic Gold Medallist and United Nations Messenger of Peace Muhammad Ali embodied the power of sports to move the global public. He once said, "I use boxing because it's a platform to get to people." Muhammad Ali showed how champion athletes can champion justice.

Inspired by his example, let us press all warring parties to lay down their weapons from the seventh day before the start of the XXXI Olympic Summer Games until the seventh day following the end of the XV Paralympic Summer Games.

May the serenity of the Olympic Flame silence the sound of gunfire.
